

# Office of National Drug Control Policy

## Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

### City of San Diego

#### Profile of Drug Indicators

January 2000



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

## **San Diego, California**

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, funding, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

### **Demographics<sup>1</sup>**

- Population: City of San Diego 1,224,848 (accounts for 43% of San Diego Counties population) San Diego County 2,794,785
- Gender Breakdown (County): 49% Female, 51% Male
- Age Composition (County): Under 18 years old 24.5%, 18-64 years old 64.6%, 65 years and older 10.9%
- Race/Ethnicity (County): 61% White, 6% Black, 9% Asian and Other, and 24% Hispanic.
- Unemployment Rate (County): 4.2%

### **Politics<sup>2</sup>**

- Mayor: Susan Golding
- City Council: Harry Mathis (District 1), Byron Wear (District 2), Christine Kehoe (District 3), George Stevens (District 4), Barbara Warden (District 5), Valerie Stallings (District 6), Judy McCarty (District 7), Juan Vargas (District 8)
- City Manager: Michael T. Uberuaga
- Chief of Police: David Bejarno

### **Programs/Initiatives**

- ONDCP designated the Southwest Border HIDTA in 1990. Included in this HIDTA are jurisdictions from California, Arizona, New Mexico, and Texas. The California partnership includes the border counties of San Diego and Imperial. The California Border Alliance Group is a geographically and culturally diverse region with 149 miles of international border. This most populous region of the Southwest Border includes San Diego and other cities. The Alliance is organized to deter, disrupt, and destroy the most significant drug trafficking organizations, reducing the supply of cocaine, marijuana, heroin and methamphetamine in the United States. The HIDTA program also addresses drug transportation, money laundering, gangs and specific local problems.<sup>3</sup>
- In FY 1998 ONDCP in conjunction with OJJDP awarded \$100,000 to the Vista Community Clinic under the Drug Free Communities Support Program grant. The Vista Community Clinic is a part of the Oceanside Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition. The Coalition will target approximately 28,000 youth ages 12 through 18 in the Vista and Oceanside school districts. The Coalition will train and support 80 adult and youth mentors to become advocates and mentors through a 60-hour leadership and mentoring training program. As the participants become skilled community advocates, they will conduct community forums to interpret the data and prioritize problems based on community drug assessment surveys.<sup>4</sup>

- *The DART program*, "which began in San Diego during 1989, involves the combined effort of various city agencies (e.g., police, fire, building inspection, zoning, and health). Collaborating departments collectively use their enforcement roles to eliminate narcotic or vice violations associated with dilapidated properties (e.g., crack houses, etc.). Rehabilitation of properties and elimination of illegal activity is achieved by placing responsibility on the property owner(s) to comply with municipal code regulations, as well as the use of targeted hotspot enforcement. Where informal cooperation with owners fails to resolve problems, abatement procedures are used and followed up with civil court proceedings. If satisfied by the evidence, judges issue a temporary injunction aimed at ending the existing nuisance. Failure to comply with the injunction constitutes contempt of court and carries substantial penalties, including up to a \$1,000 fine and/or six months in jail. Targeted properties are monitored to ensure that the owner has taken proper steps to correct identified violations, and to make arrests on the property if illegal activity continues."<sup>5</sup>
- *The Municipal Court, Drug Court Program* "began in 1997. It offers an alternative to traditional court prosecution involving incarceration without rehabilitation or drug treatment programs. Only defendants charged with a misdemeanor use or a possession case qualify. Defendants who plead guilty and have no record of violence are screened for viability and appropriateness."<sup>6</sup>
- *The Choice Program* "is an intensive mentoring and probation program for juveniles at risk of becoming serious habitual offenders--the 8 to 10 percent of juveniles committing the vast majority of crimes. Caseworkers for the program are drawn from college graduates who volunteer in the program for one year and receive a small stipend on which to live. Caseworkers are responsible for supervising 10 adolescent charges (ages 9 to 18) referred by probation officers or social workers. Caseworkers check on their charges intensively--in the morning for school attendance, in the afternoon for recreational or drug treatment program attendance, and in their homes in the evening to ensure that the family situation is safe and that juveniles are respecting curfews. Caseworkers work with teachers and, wherever possible, families to ensure that participating youth are succeeding in school and receiving appropriate support. Supported and supervised by a team of experienced professionals, caseworkers provide resources, accountability, reflection, and support, as well links to appropriate community services."<sup>7</sup>
- Residents of San Diego County can call a completely confidential Meth Hotline to report a suspected Meth lab, drug dealer, or any suspicious drug-related activity in their neighborhood. This hotline can also be used as a resource for treatment and rehabilitation information for Meth users. The Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) is funding and supporting the hotline and hotline operators are members of the California Department of Justice and trained volunteers from the San Diego State University Criminal Justice Program.
- On June 3, 1999, the Department of Justice approved a grant award to the San Diego County Drug Court System for \$274,439 for the period December 1, 1998 through November 30, 2000, to supplement state grant funds and enhance services currently provided in the Juvenile Delinquency Drug Court (JDDC) program to non-violent drug-abusing juveniles who have been made wards of the court. The purpose of the drug court program is to promote public safety, and contribute to the reduction in

substance abuse and recidivism by focusing on intensive treatment and supervision, including frequent court appearances, drug testing, counseling, support group meetings, and other referrals to community service providers.

### Crime and Drug-Related Crime

- Both property and violent crime have dropped in San Diego from 1992-1998.<sup>8</sup>

Offenses Known to Police, San Diego 1990 -1998

Year	Population	Murder	Rape	Robbery	Assault	Total Violent	Burglary	Theft	Vehicle Theft	Total Property
1998	1,214,000	42	371	2,121	6,210	8,744	7,349	28,388	9,940	45,677
1997	1,190,200	67	384	2,604	6,734	9,789	8,159	30,204	10,809	49,172
1996	1,183,100	79	368	2,998	6,703	10,148	8,608	31,688	11,129	51,425
1995	1,197,676	91	346	3,244	7,396	11,077	10,311	30,505	12,342	53,158
1994	1,184,814	113	403	3,845	8,238	12,599	12,889	35,204	16,033	64,126
1993	1,171,608	133	396	4,651	8,283	13,463	14,583	37,862	19,319	71,764
1992	1,149,598	145	485	5,321	8,840	14,791	16,437	40,798	20,231	77,466
1991	1,130,034	167	472	5,331	7,860	13,830	17,088	44,645	21,218	82,951

- In San Diego during 1998 68.6% of male and 63.9% of female arrestees tested positive for drugs.<sup>9</sup>

Percent of Arrestees Testing Positive for Drugs by Offense and Gender, San Diego 1998

Offense	Cocaine		Marijuana		Meth		Any Drug	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Violent	9.0	21.6	37.1	13.5	26.4	8.1	60.1	37.8
Property	19.6	11.5	37.3	31.1	38.2	45.9	68.6	70.5
Drug	26.0	27.8	37.7	28.9	45.9	37.8	80.1	68.9
Other	22.4	17.9	34.5	26.9	37.8	29.9	67.7	65.7
Total	19.1	20.4	36.4	26.7	28.0	33.3	68.6	63.9

### Drugs

- Heroin

Heroin use in San Diego is stable; users are mostly white in their late 20's or early 30's and mostly males. The primary method of use is injection and is used in combination with cocaine. Mexican nationals and older white males are primary sellers of heroin in San Diego. Black Tar Heroin sells for \$10-\$20 per .20 - .50 grams with a purity of 40-60%.<sup>10</sup>

Treatment admissions to publicly funded centers in San Diego involving heroin have fallen from 1,810 in 1994 to 1,334 in 1997. Heroin represented 16% of all admissions in 1997. Most of those admitted for heroin were male (63%); white (57%) or Hispanic (32%); and 35 years old or older (54%).<sup>11</sup>

- Cocaine/Crack

Cocaine and crack use in San Diego is stable. Powder cocaine users are mostly white males in there 20's or 30's. Crack user are made up of mostly by the lower socioeconomic population of San Diego. The primary methods of use are smoking

and snorting. Methamphetamine and some prescription drugs are the most common drugs used in combination with cocaine. Mexican nationals are primary sellers of cocaine and crack in the San Diego area. Powder cocaine sells for \$10 per 1/10 gram, \$60-\$100 per 1/8 an ounce, and \$6,000 to \$1,000 per ounce with a purity of 20-40%. Crack sells for \$10 a rock or \$20-\$40 for 2-4 rocks also with a purity of 20-40%.<sup>12</sup> Treatment admissions to publicly funded centers in San Diego for cocaine declined 9% from 1,395 in 1996 to 1,267 in 1997. A majority of those admitted in 1997 were male (54%), 35 or older (52%), or black (62%).<sup>13</sup>

➤ **Marijuana**

Marijuana use in San Diego is stable at a high level. Marijuana users are from all ethnicities and popular among high school and college students. Marijuana is commonly used in combination with crack and methamphetamine in San Diego. Mexican nationals and white males are selling marijuana in the San Diego area. Marijuana prices in San Diego range from \$5 for a 1 gram to \$40-\$55 for a 1/4 ounce. Sinsemilla in San Diego sells for \$40-\$50 per 1/8 ounce.<sup>14</sup>

The number of marijuana treatment admissions to publicly funded centers in San Diego rose from 679 admissions in 1996 to 821 in 1997. Marijuana admissions accounted for 7% of all admissions in 1997. The majority (70%) of these admissions were male; 32% were younger than 18; and most were white (48%) or Hispanic (24%).<sup>15</sup>

➤ **Methamphetamine**

Methamphetamine use in San Diego is up. Methamphetamine treatment admissions in San Diego to publicly funded centers rose from 3,096 in 1996 to 3,855 in 1998 and accounted from 37% of all admissions. The majority of those admitted were female (52%). The racial and ethnic breakdown of methamphetamine treatment admissions reflected the population demographics of San Diego county, except for an under representation of the Hispanic population. Less than 30% of those admitted for methamphetamine were 35 or older and 27% were 25 or younger.<sup>16</sup>

**Juveniles**

- A survey of San Diego's high school students revealed that 49.6% of them had tried marijuana at least once in their lives.<sup>17</sup>

Percent of San Diego High School Students Using Certain Drugs, 1997

Drug Type and Use	Female	Male	Total
Lifetime Marijuana Use (1)	46.3%	52.9%	49.6%
Current Marijuana Use (2)	23.0	29.7	26.4
Lifetime Cocaine Use	10.5	9.3	9.9
Current Cocaine Use	4.1	4.0	4.0
Lifetime "Crack" or "Freebase" Use	5.9	5.0	5.4
Lifetime Illegal Steroid Use	2.9	4.5	3.7
Lifetime Injected Illegal Drug Use (3)	1.3	3.0	2.2
Lifetime Use of Other Illegal Drugs (4)	14.9	16.7	15.8
Lifetime Use of Inhalants	14.5	13.9	14.3

1. Lifetime Use = ever tried drug in life

2. Current Use = used drug one or more times in last 30 days before survey

3. Used a needle to inject drugs

4. Other Drugs Include = LSD, PCP, MDMA, Heroin, Methamphetamine, and Mushrooms

➤ In 1998 56.1% of juvenile male arrestees tested positive for drugs and 10.8% of them tested positive for multiple drugs.<sup>18</sup>

Percent of Juvenile Arrestees Testing Positive  
For Drugs by Offense, San Diego 1998

Offense	Cocaine	Marijuana	Meth	Any Drug
Violent	4.6	48.1	9.3	51.9
Property	1.0	49.5	16.2	61.0
Drug	18.2	75.8	15.2	81.8
Other	3.4	41.4	10.3	48.3
Total	4.4	48.9	12.2	56.1

**Trafficking and Seizures**

➤ An excerpt from the Southwest Border HIDTA Threat Abstract: "The California Partnership area is composed of San Diego and Imperial Counties, from the Arizona border west to the Pacific ocean, and from the international border north to Orange and Riverside County lines. The region's 149 miles of international border represent 14% of the total U.S.-Mexican border, but the region contains over 50% of the Southwest border population. The Mexican cities of Tijuana and Mexicali are estimated to exceed 3 million. The large population varied terrain, including beaches, seaports, mountains, deserts, urban areas and 6 land Ports of Entry contribute to the complexity of the drug trafficking situation. Cross-border cocaine, marijuana, heroin and methamphetamine smuggling from Mexico are the primary threats to the region, with maritime smuggling via the adjacent waters of the Pacific constituting a resurgent threat. During the first 9 months of FY 97, CBAG task forces and participating agencies seized a total of more than 230,000 pounds of dangerous drugs. Thirty major drug trafficking organizations and 13 gangs with ties to major drug

traffickers are under active investigation. In San Diego County, there were more than 26,000 drug-related arrests during 1995, and over 60% of the 127,276 total arrests showed evidence of recent drug use."<sup>19</sup>

### Consequences of Use

- In San Diego during 1998 there were a total of 6,982 drug related emergency department episodes. The most common illicit drugs were marijuana (1,127 mentions), heroin (1,011 mentions), cocaine (971 mentions), and methamphetamine (721 mentions). There were a total of 12,190 drug mentions.<sup>20</sup>
- The number of drug related deaths in San Diego rose 14.5% from 366 in 1996 to 419 in 1997.<sup>21</sup>

Selected Characteristics	1996	1997
Total drug-abuse episodes	366	419
<b>GENDER</b>		
Male	267	306
Female	97	112
<b>RACE/ETHNICITY</b>		
White	266	294
Black	26	51
Hispanic	61	57
Other	9	17
Unknown	4	-
<b>AGE</b>		
6-17	2	6
18-25	34	42
26-34	60	70
35 and up	267	301
<b>SELECTED DRUGS</b>		
Alcohol-in-comb	132	165
Cocaine	108	108
Heroin/Morphine	165	165
Marijuana/Hashish	0	2
Methadone	9	11
Methamphetamine	96	115
PCP	1	2
<b>Total Drug Mentions</b>	<b>1,033</b>	<b>1,101</b>

### Sources

<sup>1</sup> San Diego County Web site: <http://www.co.san-diego.ca.us/>

<sup>2</sup> Ibid.

<sup>3</sup> Office of National Drug Control Web site: <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov>

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

- 
- <sup>5</sup> National Crime Prevention Council, *Six Safer Cities, On the Crest of the Crime Prevention Wave*, March 1999
- <sup>6</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>7</sup> Ibid.
- <sup>8</sup> San Diego Police Department Web site: <http://www.sannet.gov/police/>
- <sup>9</sup> National Institute of Justice, *1998 Annual Report on Drug Use Among Adult and Juvenile Arrestees*, April 1999
- <sup>10</sup> Office of National Drug Control Policy, *Pulse Check Trends in Drug Abuse, January -June 1998*, April 1999
- <sup>11</sup> National Institute on Drug Abuse, *Epidemiologic Trends in Drug Abuse, Volume II: Proceedings, June 1998*, January 1999
- <sup>12</sup> Office of National Drug Control Policy, *Pulse Check Trends in Drug Abuse, January -June 1998*, April 1999
- <sup>13</sup> National Institute on Drug Abuse, *Epidemiologic Trends in Drug Abuse, Volume II: Proceedings, June 1998*, January 1999
- <sup>14</sup> Office of National Drug Control Policy, *Pulse Check Trends in Drug Abuse, January -June 1998*, April 1999
- <sup>15</sup> National Institute on Drug Abuse, *Epidemiologic Trends in Drug Abuse, Volume II: Proceedings, June 1998*, January 1999
- <sup>16</sup> National Institute on Drug Abuse, *Epidemiologic Trends in Drug Abuse, Volume II: Proceedings, June 1998*, January 1999
- <sup>17</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, *Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance - United States, 1997*, August 1998
- <sup>18</sup> National Institute of Justice, *1998 Annual Report on Drug Use Among Adult and Juvenile Arrestees*, April 1999
- <sup>19</sup> Office of National Drug Control Web site: <http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov>
- <sup>20</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *Year-End 1998 Emergency Department Data from the Drug Abuse Warning Network*, December 1999
- <sup>21</sup> Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, *Drug Abuse Warning Network, Annual Medical Examiner Data 1997*, December 1999



This State Profile was prepared by the ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse is funded by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy and is a component of the [National Criminal Justice Reference Service](#) For further information concerning the contents of this profile or other drug policy issues contact:

The Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse  
PO Box 6000  
Rockville, MD 20849-6000  
1-800-666-3332  
<http://www.whitehousedrugpolicy.gov>  
[ondcp@ncjrs.org](mailto:ondcp@ncjrs.org)

